

CHARGES PLOT TO OVERTHROW DIEM'S REGIME

Viet Army Strong Man Hits C. I. A. Actions

SAIGON, Viet Nam, Sept. 2 [Reuters]—A leading South Vietnamese general accused "Communists and international adventurers" today of plotting to overthrow the government amid a crisis in relations between Saigon and Washington.

Brig. Gen. Ton That Ding, Saigon military governor who is rated the nation's most powerful general since the government crackdown against Buddhists last month, warned that the army was ready to crush any plot against President Ngo Dinh Diem.

But he refused to say whether he meant the United States was in league with Communists in trying to oust the Diem regime.

Paper Accuses CIA

An English-language Saigon newspaper asserted that the American central intelligence agency, helped by experts in engineering coup d'etats, was financing moves to oust Diem.

The Times of Viet Nam asserted that one attempted coup was postponed at the last moment Wednesday and said CIA "plotting and agitation" continued in the nation which is torn by a bloody religious dispute.

It warned that the new American Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge faced an explosive and delicate situation which may turn out to be as big a debacle as the Cuban affair.

The report—described as nonsense by an American embassy spokesman—came as the United States continued to shelter a leading anti-government Buddhist.

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Pleads for Protection

High American officials said they were delighted to have the Buddhist leader, Thich Tri Quang, who dashed up to the embassy doors last night shouting, "Let me in, help me."

This was taken to mean that the United States intended to pursue a tough line on the Buddhist issue and possibly use Thich as a bargaining point to settle the crisis. Thich is regarded as one of the architects of the Buddhist campaign against religious persecution by the Roman Catholic-led government.

In Washington, state department officials supported the American embassy action in granting asylum to the monks. They said the embassy reported that Thich Tri Quang might be killed if he were not admitted. The report said the two other monks felt they were in similar peril.

Observers also believed the incident might lead to open charges by the government that the United States was actively supporting the Buddhist rebellion.

Still Hold 6 Monks

Gen. Dinh told a press conference today that all except six monks arrested in the government swoop on the pagodas on Aug. 21 had been released. The six were being held because of communist connections.

He said 67 Buddhist students were being temporarily detained for questioning.

During the press conference, Dinh referred to Ngo Dinh Nhu, President Dien's brother and political adviser, as "our leader," because of his anti-communist background.

But he sidestepped questions about whether he considered Nhu to be a higher authority than Dien, declaring: "We stand behind any leader who is anti-communist."

Nhu, secret police chief and husband of Viet Nam's powerful Mme Nhu, is regarded as having effective control of the government.

Charges Big Spending

The Times of Viet Nam report, quoting "reliable foreign sources," said the CIA had spent 10 to 24 million dollars to organize a coup which had the blessing of high American state department officials.

It said Vietnamese authorities long had been aware of CIA efforts to create anti-government Buddhist agitation leading to confusion and hysteria which would provide fertile ground for a coup.

CIA agents were helped by military attaches of three other nations, including experts who successfully engineered coups in Turkey, Guatemala, and Korea but failed in Iran and Cuba.

But the attempted coup, scheduled for 11 p. m. Wednesday, was postponed "because the Vietnamese knew about it and were organized to resist to the end—even if it meant fighting in the streets."

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